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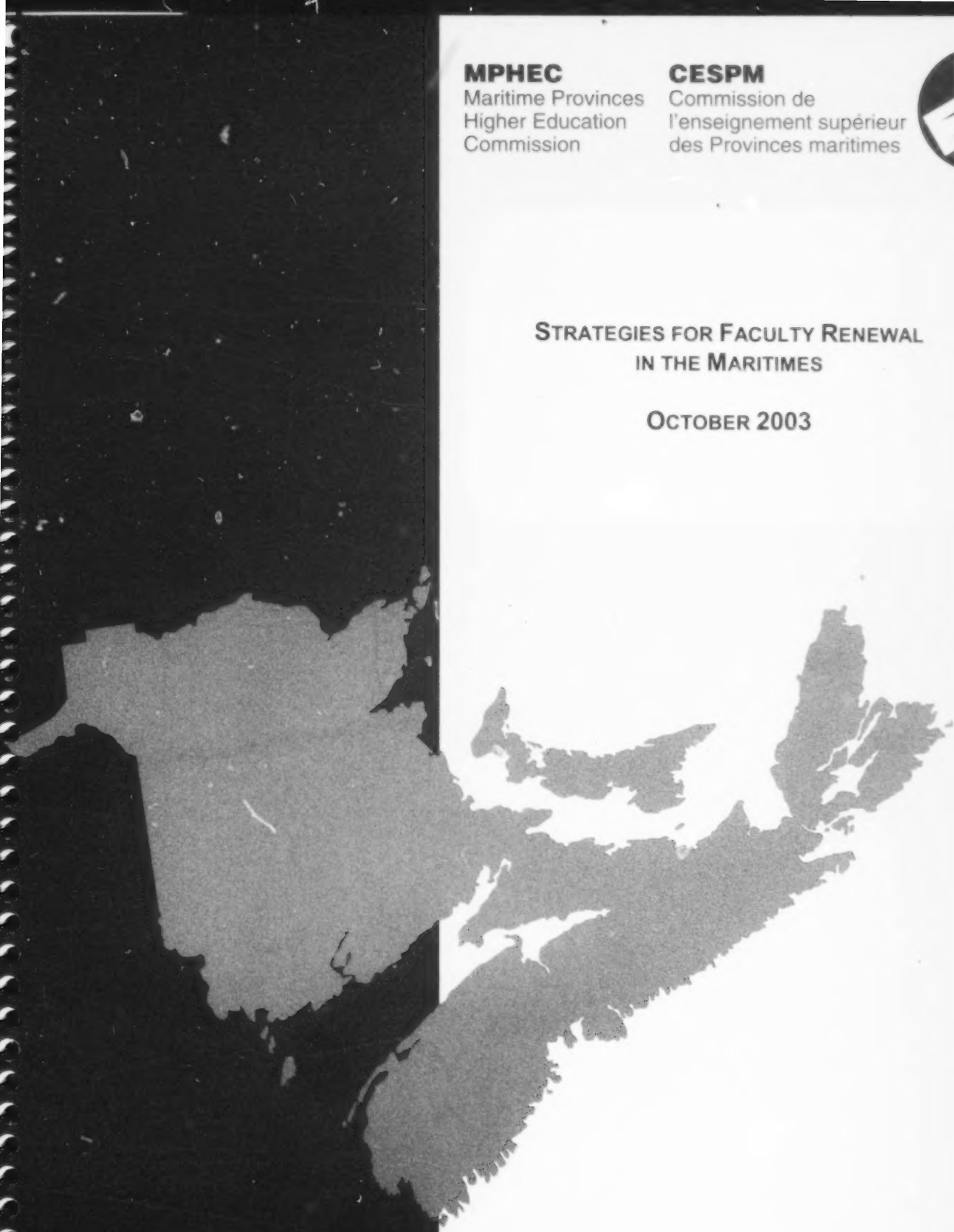
STRATEGIES FOR FACULTY RENEWAL IN THE MARITIMES

OCTOBER 2003



The Council of Maritime Premiers

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1. INTRODUCTION

Over the next ten years, it is estimated that Maritime universities will have to replace 55% of all faculty currently (1999-2000) employed in order to compensate for the combined effects of retirements and attrition.[1] The demographic phenomenon identified in the Maritime region is not an isolated trend, there is an estimated need for 32,000 new faculty to be hired across Canada in the next ten years.[2] This demographic phenomenon is creating a highly competitive hiring market across Canada and North America that will continue to grow over the next decade. Consequently, as institutions in this region undergo faculty renewal, they will face stiff competition from not only their counterparts in the region, but also from institutions across the country.

Findings from *Faculty Recruitment and Retention in the Maritimes*, a study commissioned by the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission (MPHEC) and released in August 2002, showed considerable variation among Maritime institutions in their experience of, and attitudes toward, the issue of faculty recruitment and retention. While many asserted that the competition for new faculty across Canada was not yet affecting them, a few reported being "in the thick of it". Further, while some institutions had begun to review their policies and practices to address the expected hiring demands, the majority had not. By contrast, many universities in central and western Canada have already responded to this challenge, and have implemented, or begun to implement, changes to the faculty renewal process to meet the demands of the competitive hiring market.

The potential impact of institutions in this region being unprepared for the competitive hiring environment will not only impact upon their ability to attract and retain faculty, but will likely reach beyond the doors of the region's institutions. Because universities in the Maritimes have a significant impact on the social and economic development of the region, and are the primary performers of research and development in the region, any decline in the numbers and quality of university researchers and teachers could thus negatively impact the social and economic well-being of the region as a whole. However, while institutions play the greatest role in faculty renewal, and therefore are the main agent of change, it is also clear that Maritime institutions alone cannot solve this problem. Provincial governments also have a crucial role to play.

With the dual aim of raising awareness of this issue as well as facilitating the generation of ideas, suggestions and specific actions and strategies for institutions and governments in addressing the problems identified, the MPHEC hosted the Symposium on Faculty Recruitment and Retention in the Maritimes on October 31, 2002. Representatives from the region's degree-granting institutions, faculty associations, graduate student associations, provincial governments, the Council of Atlantic Premiers, the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, and federal government agencies, participated in the one-day session. A summary of Symposium discussions may be found under Appendix 1.

This paper is the outcome of the Symposium. Beginning with an overview of Maritime faculty renewal issues, it then provides recommendations for institutions and governments, some of which will require collaboration between these stakeholders, to best address these issues. Recommendations are also provided for the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission (MPHEC). Taken together, the recommended measures

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[1]Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission (MPHEC), *Recruitment and Retention in the Maritimes* (Fredericton, 2002).

[2]Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC). *Trends* (Ottawa, 2002).

will help to ensure the success of institutions in this region in attracting and retaining faculty in a competitive hiring environment.

2. Overview of the Situation

There are three interrelated aspects to the challenge facing Maritime institutions as they undergo faculty renewal in the coming decade. These are the size and nature of the pool of available candidates, and institutional policies and practices of faculty renewal, which encompass both recruitment and retention. The major issues associated with each aspect are outlined below.

2.1 Candidate Pool

The primary factor driving the increasing competition for faculty is demographic with 27% of all faculty aged 55 years old or older in the Maritimes (1999-2000), a wave of retirements is expected to occur over the next decade. In this region, these retirements, coupled with an estimated attrition rate of 4% per year, will leave approximately 1,800 full-time faculty positions that will have to be filled over this period of time, or about 180 new faculty per year.

In addition to this, the number of new PhD graduates, which constitute the traditional supply of new faculty, cannot meet the demand for replacements. Not only are their numbers too low, with approximately 120 graduating in the Maritimes each year, but on average, only 35% normally enter academic careers.[3] In addition to heavy faculty workloads having a deterring influence, the fact that the majority tend not to enter academe may also be a side effect of the preceding years characterized by a reduced hiring demand in academe, resulting in many more PhD students actively considering and seeking out alternative careers. Moreover, many positions within Maritime institutions simply cannot be filled by graduates from the region because of the limited areas of study available at the doctoral level at the region's institutions.

A unique challenge facing the Maritimes in the formulation of any provincial or regional policies enhancing faculty renewal is the coexistence of francophone and anglophone institutions with divergent recruitment needs and strategies. As a result, describing the nature of the candidate pool and planning for change must take into account a fundamental difference based on language - while anglophone universities in the Maritimes compete with each other and with other institutions across Canada for candidates, the Université de Moncton and Université Sainte-Anne - Collège de l'Acadie instead compete primarily with Quebec institutions and even institutions in francophone nations to renew their faculty.

2.2 Recruitment

While there is increasing evidence across the country of recruitment efforts becoming better organized, more efficient, candidate-centred and pro-active, the MPHEC, in its study found a different situation in the Maritimes. That is, many institutions in the region have not yet reviewed these policies and practices, largely because, with the exception of certain fields such as Engineering, Computer Science, Nursing and Veterinary Medicine, they are not yet experiencing difficulties in attracting applicants to vacant positions. However, as the retirement wave progresses in the region and across the country, these institutions will invariably feel the effects of competition.

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[3] *Ibid.*

The recruitment policies and processes currently in place at many institutions in the region, which were developed during a time of over-supply, are often cumbersome and unresponsive to the realities of a hiring market characterized by a short supply. Positions are often advertised late in the year, and typically, candidates must go through a lengthy selection and interview process, where the onus is placed on candidates to demonstrate their suitability for appointment. Finally, once a candidate is selected, the formal approval and offer process becomes a multi-layered endeavour.

2.3 Retention

That the majority of faculty who leave their positions tend to do so within three years of job acceptance speaks to important issues regarding the candidate selection process, and the working environment, including both the nature of the work and the teaching and research infrastructure.

The first issue encompasses selection processes that do not place their primary focus on achieving optimal fit between the candidate and the specific needs of the department and the overall mission of the university as they relate to the position. When these aspects are not an integral, overt part of the selection criteria, candidates cannot demonstrate how they would complement the existing Faculty or the institution. As a result, the hiring process can become dominated by the selection committee's desire to land the most stellar candidate without regard to the realities of either the candidate's or the university's expectations once on the job. For example, this can happen where a candidate is highly research-focussed, with an established research record, and is offered a position at an institution which places a greater emphasis on the teaching function, and can offer less in research support. A lack of fit between the candidate's and the institution's expectations plays an important role in early attrition.

The quality of the working environment, including aspects of workload and collegiality, as well as the physical space, also has an important impact on the retention of new hires and is becoming a greater issue in competing for candidates. The legacy of deferred maintenance in the region's institutions - poor air quality, leaking classrooms and offices, and substandard laboratory facilities - reduces the quality of teaching and impedes research. In the worst case, it raises important health and safety issues.

Added to this, the difficulty in balancing the heavy and competing demands of teaching, research and administrative duties has a negative effect on the working environment. Junior members are often disproportionately burdened with administrative and teaching duties, with minimal training in these areas, while at the same time they are required to establish their own independent research programmes.

And although research has become a greater focus for many institutions in the region, the lack of a critical mass of research collaborators at many institutions places limitations on their ability to attract and retain research-focussed faculty.

Finally, provincial governments which do not provide multi-year funding to the institutions within their scope place them at a disadvantage, reducing their ability to create comprehensive long-term strategies for faculty renewal.

2.4 Implications

Institutions in the Maritimes are facing a considerable challenge. The combined effects of the depletion of faculty through retirement and attrition, a dearth of potential candidates with which to fill these vacant positions, and human resource policies which are left over from a buyer's market, present serious consequences for Maritime institutions if nothing is done to address them. Principally, unfilled vacancies threaten the very offering of programmes and classes; dealing with this problem by relying excessively on part-time/contract faculty will only reduce programme quality and possibly damage overall morale among university teachers. Furthermore, in the absence of appropriate strategies to recruit and retain faculty, not only are the Maritime provinces at a disadvantage in competing for candidates, they also run the risk of being specifically identified by other jurisdictions as a fertile ground from which to recruit faculty members.

Moreover, the potential impact of a do-nothing approach would likely reach beyond the doors of the region's institutions - because universities in the Maritimes have a significant impact on the social and economic development, and are the primary performers of research and development in the region, any decline in the numbers and quality of our university researchers and teachers would thus negatively impact the social and economic well-being of the region as a whole.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

Institutions play the greatest role in faculty renewal, and are therefore the main agents of change. But it is also clear that Maritime institutions alone cannot solve this problem. Provincial governments have a crucial role to play. The implementation of targeted policies at the provincial level or those developed through regional cooperation, such as those recommended below, will enhance the efforts of individual institutions and increase the competitiveness of the region as a whole. Furthermore, the MPHEC plays an important role in providing research and analysis, facilitating the exchange of information among stakeholders and encouraging collaborative efforts. The MPHEC's role in this regard will require the cooperation of institutions in the provision of data and the facilitation of information collection.

In this section, recommendations for each stakeholder group are highlighted in bold and are organized by theme: Expanding the Candidate Pool, Recruitment, and Retention. As these three aspects of the faculty renewal process are interdependent, they should be reviewed simultaneously; the success of any one measure depends on the rest. Measures intended to expand the candidate pool will reduce the need to compete in recruiting, effective recruitment measures will assist in the competition for new faculty, and by placing emphasis on ensuring a good fit between institutions and candidates, retention will be enhanced. Finally, appropriate, integrated efforts to retain faculty will maintain the achievements of the first two measures, creating a stable long-term teaching force in the region and reducing the number of vacancies and hence the pressure on recruitment efforts.

3.1 Expanding the Candidate Pool

Measures for Consideration by Institutions

Over the longer term, institutions can increase the number of students who apply to, and complete, a doctoral programme by exposing more undergraduates to research, encouraging interested students to

pursue graduate studies and by improving advisory and mentoring policies and practices for doctoral students. Over the shorter term, institutions must consider the following:

1. Increase the scope of the hiring pool by placing greater reliance on non-traditional groups such as PhDs outside academe, part-time faculty and foreign candidates. Measures to facilitate their transition to academic careers include

    a. **Explore opportunities to identify qualified candidates who have careers outside academe in order to bring them in as a bridging strategy**. These individuals would need to be carefully reintroduced/oriented to the university milieu.
    b. **Provide research opportunities for contract and part-time faculty to help retain them in the post-secondary sector, while at the same time building their research abilities.** Although the report identified that one-third of part-time teaching contracts are awarded to those with PhDs, a change in employment requirements could further expand this pool.
    c. **Enhance efforts to identify and recruit foreign candidates.**

Measures for Consideration by Provincial Governments

2. **Exercise powers under the federal-provincial immigration agreements** of recent years, and promote supportive federal immigration rules and processes related to students, faculty and family members. The federal government has recently lifted restrictions on hiring foreign candidates and has identified immigration as a priority in its innovation and skills agenda. However, more emphasis should be placed on recruiting foreign post-secondary faculty, and Canada should be actively promoted as an innovative and desirable destination for post-secondary faculty.

3. **Introduce provincial and/or regional fellowships for students to pursue graduate studies**. Such entry point incentives would support the expansion of the candidate pool by attracting more undergraduates to pursue PhD studies.

Collaborative Measures Between Institutions and Provincial Governments

4. **Support the development of new doctoral programmes**. A preferred approach would be the introduction of joint or multi-institution programmes which could be linked to provincial and regional social and economic priorities and would require the buy-in and collaboration of both institutions and provincial governments, and ideally, collaboration at the regional level. They would increase the range, accessibility, and flexibility of graduate programmes which in turn would promote greater overall participation in graduate studies, as well as increase the overall pool of candidates. The development of such programmes would also promote research linkages and interaction among institutions, and help to attract faculty by providing a more diverse and stimulating working environment. These programmes could build on existing models of cooperation between institutions in the delivery of joint programmes, such as the joint Bachelor of Nursing (St. Francis Xavier-University College of Cape Breton) and the agreement between Dalhousie University and Saint Mary's University concerning the delivery of a PhD programme in Economics. The development of any such programmes should take into account the needs of both anglophone and francophone universities.

While the development and implementation of joint programmes would largely be within the purview of the institutions involved, **governments may wish to consider assisting in the development and operation of such programmes by funding the costs of networking and collaboration**, such as costs to travel to meetings/conferences within the region, and to cover computer time.

A reconsideration of the establishment of a provincial/regional Faculty of Graduate Studies, as proposed a few years ago[4], is warranted, as this may be the best mechanism to achieve these linkages and the critical mass required.

Measures for Consideration by the MPHEC

5. **Update and enhance the statistics contained in the Faculty Recruitment and Retention in the Maritimes report in two years' time**. This update would include trends in full-time and part-time faculty demographics, the supply of PhD graduates and enrolments, and the percentage remaining in or returning to the region. The report should also attempt to identify emerging gaps in faculty recruitment by discipline.

6. **In cooperation with institutions and their alumni offices, explore and develop methods to track Maritime PhD graduates for the purpose of faculty recruitment**. Evidence indicates that it may be easier to attract and retain candidates who are originally from the region.

3.2 Recruitment

Recruitment efforts are largely the responsibility of institutions and much information is available to help them design recruitment strategies and policies tailored to their individual needs (see *Faculty Recruitment and Retention in the Maritimes*). While institutions in the region have disparate needs and any changes made to their recruitment policies should reflect their mission statements and the particular niches they occupy, there are some crucial changes that must take place.

Generally, any policies or practices left over from the employer's market of the 1990s which work against successful recruitment should be changed. Recruitment processes should be efficient, and aim to welcome and engage new candidates. The key issue is to ensure institutions are competitive with institutions outside the region and with industry. The recommendations below can be applied in the near term to meet the needs of hiring faculty in high-demand fields, and over the long term as more fields become affected by rising numbers of retirements.

Measures for Consideration by Institutions

7. **Carefully and accurately define the requirements for each position advertised, taking into consideration the institution's overall focus as well as departmental needs, and communicate these to candidates during the recruitment process.** Ensuring a good fit between a candidate and the institution at the front end is essential for recruitment, as candidates will be better able to

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[4]Perkin, J.R.C. *Issues and Options: A Report on Graduate Studies in Nova Scotia*. A Report to the Nova Scotia Council on Higher Education (Halifax, 1994).

determine the job requirements and present a portfolio that demonstrates their fit with the criteria. Establishing fit is essential for retention.

8. **Hire promising candidates at the master's degree level and assist them in obtaining their PhDs**. In order to succeed, such an approach must provide candidates some relief from teaching and other duties during this period, and should include incentives to ensure timely completion of doctoral programmes.

9. **Differentiate salary structure and introduce signing bonuses for hiring in those disciplines where the demand for candidates exceeds supply**. This will enable institutions to compete effectively for candidates in national and international markets and across sectors.

10. **Review academic qualifications required for employment**. In certain circumstances, requirements could be modified to accept candidates with master's degrees or the emphasis on post-doctoral training could be reduced or eliminated.

Measure to be Considered by Provincial Governments

Provincial governments can make significant contributions through the introduction of entry point incentives:

11. **Introduce income tax incentives for new hires**. This measure has been employed with success by the province of Quebec.

Collaborative Measures Between Institutions and Provincial Governments

These measures must integrate, where appropriate, the needs of both anglophone and francophone universities.

12. **Offer doctoral scholarships portable within the region. These would be awarded to promising candidates, identified by institutions, who choose to pursue doctoral studies at a Maritime institution, with an agreement that they return to the institution to teach upon completion of their programme**. Universities could also elect to offset differential fees for international students.

13. **For specific fields of study which are not offered in the Maritimes and cannot feasibly be developed in the region, and where a high and consistent demand for candidates has been identified, provincial governments could examine the appropriateness of establishing seat purchase agreements for doctoral level programmes with institutions outside the region.** These seat purchases would be established with the expectation that the candidates would return to the region to teach upon graduation. Such an initiative could be implemented at the provincial level, or as a collaborative regional programme. To ensure the success of this arrangement, contact with students during their out-of-province studies must be established and maintained to keep them informed of events and opportunities in their home province or region. This arrangement would be similar to a successful programme in place in New Brunswick for francophones studying in health disciplines in Quebec, which boasts a return rate of 85%.

14. **Introduce a bridging programme that would provide resources to institutions to retain candidates pending the availability of a full-time position**. Such a programme could for example

help institutions to attract new candidates from within the part-time faculty ranks. This would help to ease the transition from a faculty made up of a large proportion of senior members to one comprised of more junior members. It would also allow for recruitment in advance of the intense competition forecast for the coming years. Institutions, governments and faculty associations need to collaborate to address potential concerns related to short-term growth in part-time faculty, labour-relations issues, and university autonomy over the hiring process.

15. **Establish a coordinating mechanism with other institutions, and private and public sector organizations to facilitate access for spouses to employment opportunities**. This will help to address the challenges that dual-academic couples face in finding jobs.

3.3 Retention

As with recruitment, efforts to improve retention are largely the responsibility of the institutions. Overall, to improve retention, institutions need to encourage the development of a more welcoming environment, clearly define mutual expectations, and ease the transition to the academic working environment. Institutions must recognize and value junior faculty, and foster collegial working environments and open, inclusive governance structures. New faculty must be given time and resources to build their research programmes.

Institutions must also recognize the negative impact of increasing workloads of faculty. With increasing numbers of part-time faculty, there are fewer people to carry out the administrative work, in addition, these skills are not developed within a PhD training, their development needs to be supported. Institutions need to find an appropriate balance between teaching, administration and research that reflects their mission and niche areas. Teaching and research, in particular, are complementary activities, and the balance that is struck should be reflected in recruitment and retention policies, job descriptions, hiring processes, orientation, mentoring, tenure track and promotion decisions, and peer recognition. In addition, junior members should not be disproportionately burdened with administrative and teaching duties and the balance between teaching and research should be appropriately adjusted over the career cycle. Furthermore, promotional and tenure systems need to be flexible and responsive to gender issues, such as the greater likelihood of women taking time for parenting/family responsibilities.

Where research is an important part of the institution's mandate, it is important to recognize the constraints placed on research by institutional size and, for rural institutions, by isolation, and to provide more opportunities for collaboration.

Measures for Consideration by Institutions

16. **Examine and develop mentoring programmes.** These programmes should assist new faculty in adjusting to all facets of their career, including teaching, research, administration and connection with the community. Recognizing that the early retirement measures in some institutions have reduced the pool of potential mentors, institutions could seek to delay retirement or introduce graduated retirement, perhaps even to the point of abolishing mandatory retirement. In certain circumstances, professor emeriti could be called upon to serve as mentors.

17. **Provide start-up funding and relief from teaching and administrative duties to assist new faculty in establishing their research programmes**.

Measures for Consideration by Provincial Governments

18. **Provide multi-year funding**. This is a key measure essential for long-term planning by institutions.

Provincial governments need to enhance their recognition of the role of university research, specifically the critical role it plays in economic development, and the increasing involvement of students, including undergraduates, in that research.

19. **Enhance matching funding for federal programmes such as CFI and AFI**. Faculty who are awarded funds under these programmes should have a reasonable expectation of obtaining matching funding; faculty who do not are likely to move elsewhere.

20. **Establish a research funding envelope for projects in areas of specific interest for provincial public policy.** To achieve the maximum benefit of such a programme, provinces would have to define, in collaboration with institutions, their priority areas for research.

Collaborative Measures for Institutions and Provincial Governments

Given the strong influence that the availability of research opportunities has on retention, universities should collaborate to extend the range and scope of these types of opportunities.

21. **Build stronger research links between the universities within the region and elsewhere**. Such a programme could be linked to the development of joint or collaborative PhD programmes as described above, and would require some funding from provincial governments to support travel and access to equipment. The experience of New Brunswick with the research partnership between Université de Moncton and Université Laval, and the Fredericton and Saint John campuses of the University of New Brunswick suggests that substantial collaborative activity can be generated for a fairly modest investment.

Collaborative Measure for Institutions and the MPHEC

A faculty member's decision to leave their position presents an opportunity for institutions to determine the reasons involved, and will help to identify possible interventions.

22. **Administer an exit interview or survey to departing faculty.** Ideally, this would be a one-time project which would capture the responses of faculty who had quit their positions within the previous three years. The survey instrument should be developed and standardized in collaboration with all participating institutions and the MPHEC, and the interviews conducted by an external consultant hired by the MPHEC to ensure neutrality. Such research would provide important insights for institutions and policy-makers, contribute to more accurate forecasting of impending shortages and recruitment needs, and support long-term programme planning. It would provide an excellent information base for the measures described in other sections of this action plan.

Measure for Consideration by the (Government of Canada) Federal Government

The federal government was identified as a critically important partner. Given its growing participation in the post-secondary agenda, it was perceived that the federal government must contribute to its fulfilment, particularly in the areas of graduate studies, research, and the indirect costs of research. In fact, in the Federal Government's Budget Plan 2003, permanent funding ($225 million/year) was announced for the indirect costs of research sponsored by federal granting councils.

23. **Federal government programmes must recognize the uniqueness of institutions in the Maritimes in all aspects of their infrastructure - that is, a greater proportion of older buildings requiring repairs and maintenance, the fact that they are the main performers of research in the region, and finally that while the Maritime region houses 5.9% of Canada's total population, it educates 7.6% of the nation's university students.**

4. Next Steps

The purpose of this document is to define the main factors underpinning faculty recruitment and retention issues in the Maritimes, and to provide specific measures for all stakeholders to ensure the success of institutions in this region as they face the challenge of attracting and retaining top-quality faculty in a competitive hiring environment. While the bulk of the work has to be done at the institutional level, it is clear that institutions cannot meet these challenges alone. Only the combined efforts of governments, institutions and the MPHEC working together will ensure the long-term success of faculty renewal in the region.

The MPHEC has reviewed the recommendations made for its role, and is committed to preparing a progress report in two years' time. The report will include an update of the statistics presented in *Faculty Recruitment and Retention in the Maritimes*, with more information on the demographic profile of part-time faculty. The progress report will also include descriptions of relevant regional developments and initiatives. The MPHEC will also consider conducting exit interviews with faculty who have quit their positions over the past three years with the purpose of determining the factors involved in their decision to leave. The results of such a project will further illuminate policy discussions on all levels.

Provincial and federal governments, and institutions in the Maritime region, are invited to consider the recommendations contained in this Action Plan and to respond to this document.

APPENDIX 1

FINAL SUMMARY

SYMPOSIUM ON FACULTY RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION IN THE MARITIMES

OCTOBER 31, 2002

BACKGROUND

Demographic forces are converging to create growing challenges in the recruitment and retention of post-secondary faculty. Across North America, enrolment is increasing while faculty are aging. These trends mean that in Canada alone, 30,000 new faculty will need to be recruited in the coming decade. Strong, concerted action is required in the Maritime provinces to ensure that the region's needs are identified and met. Such action will sustain the excellence and diversity of the region's post-secondary sector, and will ensure that the post-secondary sector can continue and extend its vital role in the knowledge-based social and economic development of the region.

In Fall 2001, the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission launched an initiative to address this issue which led to the release of the report, *Faculty Recruitment and Retention in the Maritimes*, in August 2002. The report identified trends of aging faculty, increasing faculty-student ratios, and increased use of part-time faculty. It forecast that 55% of the current full-time faculty pool would be lost to retirement and attrition over the coming decade, creating a need to recruit over 1,800 new faculty. Based on regional graduation rates and the proportion choosing academic careers, the report predicted that over three-quarters of those faculty would need to be recruited from outside the region. As well, the study analyzed the competitive factors affecting faculty recruitment and retention, and called on institutions and provinces to jointly develop an integrated regional approach to ensure that the region's needs are met.

On October 31, MPHEC held a symposium to build on the work of the report, attended by over seventy representatives of institutions, faculty associations, government, and other stakeholders. The day opened with an overview of the national situation by Robert Giroux, President of the AUCC, followed by an analysis and comparison of the regional situation, presented by Mireille Duguay, CEO of MPHEC. Participants then broke into facilitated discussion groups to identify possible strategies and actions. These discussions resulted in a wide range of possible approaches, which were reported back to the full group at the end-of-day plenary. It was agreed that these ideas and suggestions would be concisely summarized and synthesized, and returned to participants for review. This paper has been prepared in support of that measure.

The discussion groups were guided in their work by an outline which called on participants to consider what actions might be taken by individual institutions, by individual provincial governments, and by the region. Groups were also asked to consider how stakeholders could best collaborate to address these issues, and what further steps should be taken to build on the work of the symposium. Those questions form the framework for the following description and analysis.

INSTITUTIONAL ROLES AND POTENTIAL MEASURES

1. Institutions play a major role in all four of the factors identified in the research as affecting faculty recruitment and retention – compensation, quality of life, the work environment, and research support. As well, the design and implementation of selection processes can affect recruitment, while the institution's approach to human resource management can have significant impacts on retention. While salaries in the region are below national averages for the most part, quality of life is seen as a strength. The challenge facing institutions is to take action in those areas where they have significant influence – such as hiring and promotion processes, working conditions, mentoring, research support – to create employment options which are competitive overall with opportunities both outside academe and outside the region.

2. Discussion took place of the research/teaching nexus, in the context of the growing emphasis and profile of research in recent years. An appropriate balance must be found between teaching and research, which recognizes that they are both essential and inextricably intertwined, and which values both. This balance must occur both among faculty, and among institutions. It must be reflected in the processes of faculty recruitment and retention – job descriptions, hiring processes, orientation, mentoring, tenure track and promotion decisions, and peer recognition.

3. Action needs to be taken to build the pool of potential candidates. Measures could include the following:

    a. As a long term measure, the pool of graduate students needs to be enlarged. Specific measures could include the following:
        - Introduce or enhance debt remission measures for undergraduates pursuing graduate studies, in recognition of the growth in undergraduate debt-burden during the 1990s.
        - Make more use of summer research internships for undergraduates to encourage more undergraduates to undertake graduate studies. Some support is currently available through NSERC, but similar support is needed from the other granting councils. AUCC is currently promoting such a measure.

    b. Research opportunities for contract and part-time faculty could be enhanced to retain them in the post-secondary sector while strengthening this potential source of new full-time faculty.

c. Opportunities could be explored to identify potential faculty who had had lengthy careers outside academia, and bring them in for limited term appointments, as a bridging strategy over the next five years. Such individuals would be required to have a minimum of a master's degree, and would need to be carefully reintroduced or oriented to the university milieu.
d. Research should be undertaken to discover why only one-third of PhDs choose academe. Such research should include a gender dimension. This research could include a further symposium for students, engaging doctoral students from throughout the region.

4. Measures should be taken to address barriers and disincentives to a career in academe identified through this research. Pending this work, a number of possible disincentives to an academic career, and some potential measures to address them, were noted:

a. The length of time needed to launch a career – with the average age of first hires 35 or older – was seen as a significant issue, placing limitations on the time remaining thereafter to build a career and achieve promotion. Possible solutions included reducing the time to graduation, accelerating the hiring process, and reducing the emphasis on the post-doctoral fellow stage.
b. Starting salaries vary by institution and in many cases are not competitive, either with industry or with other institutions outside the region. One institution's approach of offering a starting salary based on the average of a dozen similar institutions across Canada was noted as being effective. Such an approach at the regional level would require increased core funding.
c. Heavy workloads of 55 hours a week or more were seen as a disincentive. A need was seen for measures to assist new faculty to build their research programmes, and to ensure that they are not disproportionately burdened with administrative and service tasks. More broadly, there is a need to adjust the balance between teaching, research, and service over the career cycle.
d. Traditional, hierarchical, closed working environments were noted as a disincentive. To address this, institutions need to recognize and value junior faculty, and foster a collegial working environment and open, inclusive governance structures.

5. The length of time required to complete a doctoral programme may be a barrier to both student participation and retention. Action to shorten the time required may be of value in encouraging more students to enter doctoral programmes, in reducing attrition among those who do enter, and in graduating students more quickly to meet short-term and medium-term needs. More intensive advisory and mentoring supports for students were seen as a key element of such a strategy. Some examples of such initiatives are already underway.

6. Recruitment processes should be examined to identify and address practices lingering from the employer's market of the 1990s which may be alienating potential new hires, such as unduly lengthy selection processes, or processes which place all the onus on the candidate and none on the institution to prove a fit. In general, recruitment processes should aim to welcome and engage new candidates. This is already happening in a growing number of institutions.

7. A need was seen for a strategy in the short and medium-term aimed specifically at certain high demand disciplines, notably some professional programmes such as nursing, accounting, engineering, and commerce. The measures currently needed to compete effectively for candidates in national and international markets are creating increasing concerns within institutions regarding differential salaries and incentives. Potential measures in such a strategy included multi-year contracts and modification of requirements to accept a master's degree. Some scope was also seen to recruit candidates with master's degrees and to assist them to obtain their PhDs. It was cautioned, however that in order to succeed, such an approach must provide for candidates to have some relief from teaching and other duties during this period. Concern was also expressed that such an approach might actually delay completion of doctoral programmes or contribute to attrition from doctoral programmes.

8. A need was also seen for each institution to have a long-term recruitment and retention strategy aligned with its mission and vision, and aimed at building strength and maintaining quality, particularly in its areas of research excellence.

9. As a general approach across the region, it was suggested that greater emphasis be put on recruiting candidates from just below the top tier, rather than joining in the intense competition to recruit the rising stars.

10. With regard to retention:

    a. More emphasis is needed on careful recruitment at the front end to ensure a good fit between candidate and institution, thereby promoting better retention. The University of Windsor's experience related to its early retirement programme and renewal efforts offers an interesting model in this regard.
    b. A more welcoming environment is needed for new hires, as well as clearly stated mutual expectations, and an easier transition from graduate studies to work. It was noted that a growing number of institutions are providing programmes and mentoring supports to build the teaching skills of new faculty and to integrate them into the university environment.
    c. Promotional and tenure systems need to be flexible and responsive to gender issues, such as gender differences in time taken for parenting responsibilities.
    d. Institutions should ensure that they have a system in place to carry out exit interviews with departing faculty to identify factors affecting their decision. Where appropriate, this information should be shared with other institutions in support of developing regional strategies.
    e. Greater emphasis is needed on mentoring of new faculty, recognizing that the early retirement measures in some institutions have reduced the pool of potential mentors.

11. Early retirement programmes were viewed as a measure more associated with the cost reduction efforts of the mid- and late-1990s. A need was seen to shift in the opposite direction, of seeking delayed or graduated retirement, perhaps even to the point of abolishing mandatory retirement. An increase in the use of the professor emeritus approach was seen as another potential measure.

12. A need was also seen for a specific strategy for the Université de Moncton and the Université Sainte-Anne - Collège de l'Acadie, which takes into account that their environment and competitive context differs from that of the other institutions in the region. Within Canada, they are competing primarily with Quebec-based institutions, while internationally, they are competing with francophone nations for faculty. The strategy must recognize and address these issues.

Provincial Roles and Potential Measures

13. The federal government, although not represented at the symposium, was identified as a critically important partner. Given its growing participation in the post-secondary agenda, the federal government must contribute to its fulfilment, particularly in the areas of graduate studies, research, and the indirect costs of research.

14. Stable multi-year funding was seen as a key measure by provinces to assist institutions to plan for and meet their faculty recruitment and retention needs. New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island are currently nearing the end of their first three-year funding plan and discussions are underway for the next round, offering an opportunity to incorporate measures related to faculty recruitment and retention. Nova Scotia has some past experience with this approach as well, and support was expressed for a return to this approach in that province.

15. A need was also identified to increase provincial core funding to:
    - take account of the growing role and higher cost of research at institutions;
    - modernize and expand infrastructure to allow new federal funding to be more fully used; and
    - enable institutions to be more competitive on salaries.

16. Infrastructure issues were identified as needing attention, in particular the need to upgrade and expand laboratory facilities. Such a measure would maximize the benefits of federal investments in research, as well as helping to attract and hold faculty. Increased collaboration with research institutions is providing some access to their lab facilities, but at the same time is increasing demand for university facilities by external collaborators. More broadly, it was suggested that provincial governments needed to recognize more fully the growing role of research in universities, the critical role it plays in economic development, and the increasing involvement of students, including undergraduates, in that research. Core funding needs to be revised accordingly to recognize the higher costs of research relative to teaching, and to increase investments in research facilities serving both faculty and students. New Brunswick's Infrastructure Trust Fund was highlighted as a current measure in this area.

17. Scope was also seen for provincial governments to individually or collectively establish and fund programmes and services outside the core funding system, including the following:

    a. Drawing on experience with physician recruitment in the health sector, each provincial government could engage a recruiter who would work even-handedly with all institutions in that province.
    b. A possible role was seen for both provincial and federal governments in assisting with the short-term strategy to address faculty shortages in high-demand professional fields, given the importance of those

programmes to the labour market. Quebec's measures were noted in this regard: income tax incentives, and a programme to develop junior level research capacity through supports such as funding for course relief.

c. A need was also seen for reinvestment in doctoral programmes, with emphasis on new programmes linked with provincial and regional social and economic priorities and strategic plans.
d. Another potential measure might involve scholarships for graduate study:
   - Assistance could be offered to people from outside the region to study in the Maritimes and then to stay and teach. In the case of international students, these should at least offset differential tuition fees.
   - As well, scholarships could be offered to Maritimers to study elsewhere and then return to the region to teach. It was noted that linkages should be maintained with those students to keep them in touch with events and opportunities at home. Such an approach is currently in place for New Brunswick francophones studying in health disciplines in Quebec, and is credited with contributing to the 85% return rate.
e. Strong interest was expressed in creation of a bridging programme which would provide resources to retain promising part-time or contract faculty pending availability of a position. Such a programme would also assist in the coming transition from very senior faculty, to a large number of new faculty, and would allow recruitment in advance of the intense competition forecast for coming years. Particular emphasis could be placed in institutional areas of research excellence. Such a programme could be sponsored by government. Collaboration between institutions, governments, and faculty associations would be required to address potential concerns with regard to short-term growth in part-time faculty, labour relations issues, and university autonomy over the hiring process. A bridging programme exists in Alberta, and has helped the University of Alberta in renewing 50% of its faculty during the past five years.
f. Further programme support for research was seen as valuable as well, particularly in the area of assisting with matching fund requirements of federal programmes, and support for linkages and interaction among institutions.

18. As identified in research, employment opportunities for spouses are an increasingly important factor, particularly for rural universities. Provincial governments can help to address this by facilitating access by spouses to public sector employment opportunities, as Prince Edward Island and UPEI are currently doing.

19. Provincial governments can also support efforts to recruit both students and faculty from other countries, by exercising their powers under the federal provincial immigration agreements of recent years, and by promoting supportive federal immigration rules and processes, related to students, faculty, and family members.

Potential Regional Measures

20. MPHEC was viewed as a very important mechanism for regional collaboration. Participants called on MPHEC to continue its coordination role in addressing the issue of faculty recruitment and retention. Specific roles included the following:
   a. act as a clearinghouse for a databank of faculty expertise and profiles, creating a regional hiring pool;
   b. assist in public education and awareness, with emphasis on themes of quality and accountability;
   c. facilitate information sharing both on the broad issues related to faculty recruitment and retention, and on specific issues such as vacancies;
   d. provide data and information to support effective decision-making; and
   e. play a role in regional collaboration on international recruitment.

Opportunities for Collaboration

21. The lack of public recognition and understanding of the demands and workload of an academic career was identified as an issue both in terms of individual choices to pursue an academic career, and broad public support for investment in post-secondary education. Public awareness and public education measures on the role and benefits of universities are needed to address this issue. Institutions, individually and collectively, should bear primary responsibility for this, shifting their message from the negative – underfunding – to the positive – their contribution to social and economic well-being not only for their students but for their societies. Provincial governments and regional structures should affirm these themes and carry out complementary public education measures.

22. A need was seen to further define the issue through research on selected issues:

a. the demographics of the part-time faculty pool, including the extent to which it is comprised of retired faculty, in order to identify more precisely the extent of potential full-time faculty;
b. supply-side factors related to the overall size of the graduate pool, the proportion of those choosing academe, and the proportion in turn of those remaining in the region; and,
c. demand-side factors related to the competition both from non-institutional sectors within the region, and other institutions outside the region.

23. In the recruitment area, a need was seen for collaboration to avoid costly and unproductive bidding wars between institutions in areas of scarcity, recognizing that such collaboration might be difficult to achieve.

24. Given that new faculty are strongly interested in research opportunities, universities could collaborate to extend the range and scope of such opportunities. Particular potential was seen to build stronger research links between the larger universities and smaller undergraduate institutions.

25. Potential benefits were also seen in greater collaboration among institutions to offer shared programmes. For example, StFX and UCCB are about to graduate their first shared class of nurses; Dalhousie and Saint Mary's are discussing a joint PhD programme. Such an approach might increase the range, accessibility, and flexibility of graduate programmes, which in turn might promote greater participation in graduate studies. This would increase the overall pool of candidates, increase the number of specialized degrees available in the region, promote research linkages and interaction among institutions, and help attract faculty through a more diverse and stimulating working environment.

26. Another possible measure involves fellowships, which are portable throughout the region, aimed at attracting candidates from outside the region. Such a measure would require collaboration among all stakeholders.

NEXT STEPS

27. A number of suggestions were made for next steps to build on the work of the symposium: As an immediate follow-up, it was proposed that:

a. the MPHEC prepare a summary of symposium discussions and circulate it to symposium participants for review and comment; and
b. the MPHEC write to the three Maritime Premiers on behalf of symposium participants, noting the work to date, expressing support for stable multi-year funding approaches, and calling on Premiers to place priority on the recommendations to arise from the work. This letter should be explicitly linked to the current Action Plan for regional cooperation.

28. In the short term, it was suggested that:

a. based on responses, MPHEC prepare a more detailed Action Plan for distribution early in the new year;
b. further research be undertaken to more fully define selected aspects of the issue;
c. institutions take action to create a better internal awareness of this issue at the departmental level;
d. MPHEC consider a further symposium, involving graduate students from across the region in discussion of the factors affecting their choices and decisions.

29. In the longer term, it was suggested that:

a. a ten-year plan be prepared which acknowledges the issue, defines its dimensions, analyzes its context (e.g., limited industry capacity, critical federal role), establishes goals and guiding principles (e.g. strengths of regional system emanating from diversity, value and interdependence of both teaching and research), and sets out a realistic strategy;
b. a Progress Report be prepared after one or two years, updating the situation, describing actions taken, and assessing their implications.